

# A Short Overview of the Faith of Jesus Christ and the Antichrist<sup>1</sup>

According to Matthias Flacius Illyricus

## I Timothy 1

“Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...”

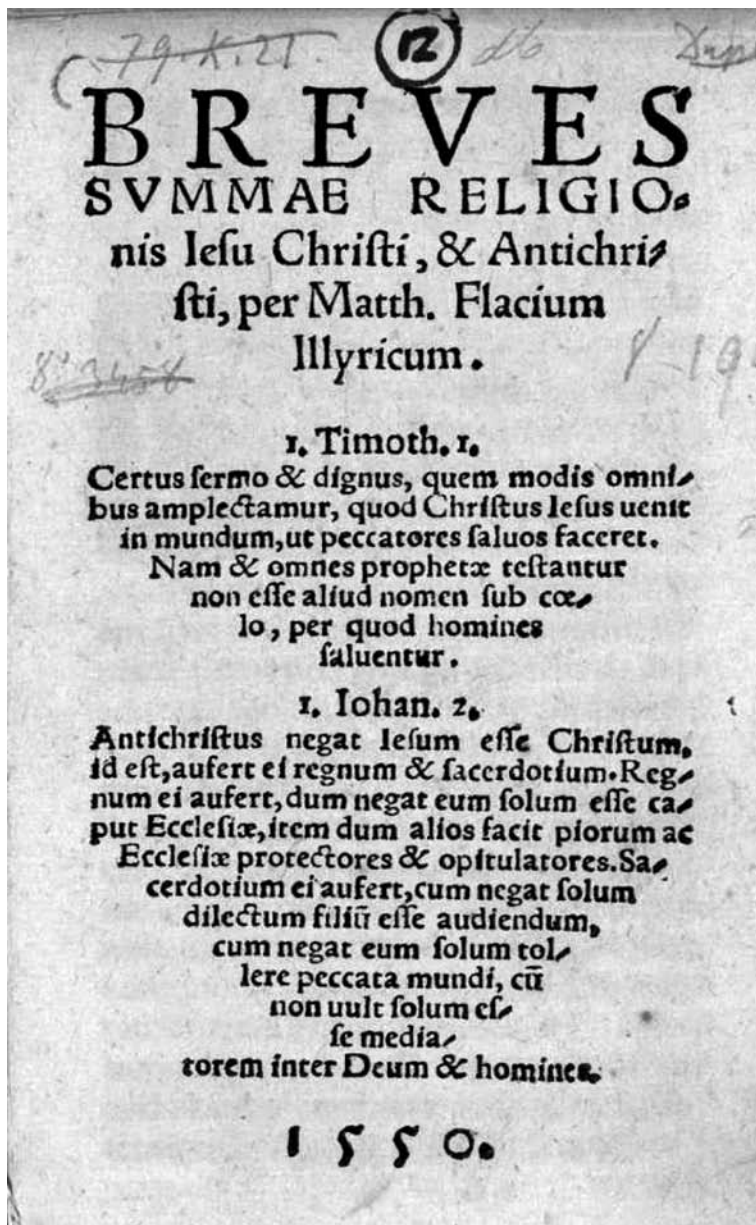
For all prophets also testify that there is no other name under heaven by which people might be saved.

## I John 2

The antichrist denies that Jesus is the Christ, i.e., he does not recognize his kingdom (kingship) and priesthood. He denies him his kingdom by denying that only he is the head of the church, as well as by making others protectors and helpers of pious people and the church. He denies him his priesthood by denying that one should only listen to the beloved Son, by denying that only he takes away the sins of the world and by wanting to be the mediator between God and people.

1550.

1 Translation of *Breves Symmae Religionis Iesu Christi, & Antichristi, per Matth. Flacium Illyricum*, from Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München.



*Breves Symmae Religionis Iesu Christi, & Antichristi, per Matth. Flacium Illyricum.* Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München.

## **The Doctrine of Christ**

The servants of Christ, according to his instruction, teach repentance and the forgiveness of sins, and they instruct people to stop sinning.

First of all, they preach repentance, for by preaching the law, they condemn all people for sin. For example, to those who are taught about the one and triune God, the creator of the world, they say that by the fall of the first man, sin came into the whole world, and therefore all people are conceived and born as sinners, (Psalm 51). The invention of the heart is always evil from birth; the heart does not accept what is from God, but despises and hates God, and constantly works against him. All these evils very heavily insult the righteous God, who very strictly demands that people complete and perfect external obedience of action and internal obedience of intellect, will and feelings. Because of this, he wants to punish people with eternal ruin. The servants of Christ encourage people to seriously regret their sins, to fear the wrath of God and eternal ruin, to stop doing evil and to look for a way to achieve forgiveness of sins to escape the wrath of God as well as eternal punishment.

Second, by preaching the gospel, those who speak about Christ proclaim freedom from sin through Christ, for God so loved the world that he incarnated his only begotten Son and gave him over to the most shameful death so that all who repent, and who through him with faith call on the Lord, may be saved. They say that he is the only lamb who takes away the sin of the world and that truly there is no other name under the heavens by which people can be saved. Furthermore, they say that he is the only way, the truth and the life, the only bread that has descended from heaven, and that to him, the shepherd and life giver, all sinners who are hungry for God's righteousness should come; that those who are tired, burdened and thirsty need only come to him, even though they have no money, and he will nourish them himself for free. They say that after his passion and resurrection, he sat to the right of his father, that he is the only mediator between God and humanity, that he is the only intercessor and mediator for wretched sinners, and that only through him, can people, in all their misery, approach the throne of divine majesty with confidence. That is to say, anything asked in faith in his name, will surely be accomplished. Furthermore, they say that Christ is the only head of the church, that he controls it and defends it from the devil and the world, and that finally, he will gloriously guide it into eternal happiness.

Third, the servants of Christ teach that people must seriously repent for their sins and denounce the shameful deeds and crimes of their former life to be free of

those sins, allowing God's wrath and eternal ruin to run its course through Christ's goodness on the cross, and then people are transformed into new life by receiving the Holy Spirit, and are equipped for good deeds. However, once this has taken place, they must not then frenzy in their passions, returning to their vomit or rolling in the mud again like pigs, willingly throwing themselves into the slavery of the devil, and therefore calling the wrath of God and eternal ruin upon themselves. Rather, they must, with all their might, keep themselves from sinning again, and must diligently serve God according to the mandates of his word (disregarding human habits, through which they pointlessly worship God) through which the heavenly Father is also glorified, and they do not fall into the wrath of God.

Truly, when this human misery comes into existence so that the original sin even settles in the bodies and hearts of saints, causing them to fall up to seven times a day, and since it is impossible for anyone who is alive to be justified before God's eyes – for should someone say that they are without sin, they would be lying – the only thing left to do is to dedicate oneself to repentance and the forgiveness of sins, and to continually cry: release, release, release our debts. The third thing that must be adhered to is: Do not sin anymore, i.e., fight with all your might to stop sinning. Therefore, in the course of one's life, a person goes through this three-part cycle of Christian doctrine, until they, rid of their earthly body and sanctified, move over to the Lord Jesus. Furthermore, God works with people and they work with him on the basis of these two instruments: service (which consists of words and sacraments) and faith. Service is truly an instrument of God and is like the hand of the rich father by which he gives his goods and continues to give them to his fallen sons. On the other hand, faith is a beggar's hand by which beggars receive his goods. We must fight against the devil with the sword of the Spirit, i.e., the word of God and the shield of faith.

This is godly doctrine, taken from the word of God in an obvious way, which should surely be undoubted among Christians.

## **The Doctrine of the Antichrist**

The servants of the Antichrist, on the other hand, teach that Christ justified his people only once in baptism and that they then begin wearing a white robe of innocence.

Should a person sin after their baptism, the servants of the Antichrist say that the person lost those white clothes and lost the ship, i.e., the power and privilege of baptism and Christ. Therefore, if they want to be saved from the shipwreck, they must grab hold of the plank of penance (this turns them away from the



*Breues Symmae Religionis Iesu Christi, & Antichristi.* Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München.

gospel and back to the law), i.e., they must be sufficiently broken because of the greatness of their sin (which is impossible), they must have sufficiently confessed all of their sins and circumstances (which is also impossible), there must have been sufficient satisfaction, and Christ had to pay for the sins before baptism, while they had to pay after their baptism. However, this is impossible through the keeping of the Decalogue; people owe God obedience in a different way. The teachings of the antichrist lead people to do deeds that God did not command (and in that way they turn Christ's church from both the gospel and the law to human rules), such as celibacy, voluntary poverty, pilgrimages, endless little prayers, floggings, fasting as well as other willingly or unwillingly executed tortures and punishments of the body.

If a person is unable or unwilling to fulfill these demands themselves, it means nothing because others can be paid to do it on their behalf. That is to say that the Holy Father the Pope sells indulgences and many charters. There are also the saints (Francis, Dominic and countless other mediators) whose mediation can be bought from monks. There are different spiritual people who sell Mass and solemn funerals, and by whose lamentations the buyer will, without doubt, be delivered from purgatory. There are many societies of monks and nuns who are able to speak salvific sayings which they can sell or freely give, and which will allow a person to be cleansed of sin and fly straight into heaven.

Also, if one wears a cowl, before or after death, it cleans sinners just like they were cleansed through their baptism before that. Magically blessed water and salt that destroy sins are available, and they become salvation and life when dispersed. There are statues of the Lamb of God, sanctified plants and candles and a thousand other cures and ways by which one can avoid hell and enter the kingdom of heaven. One can fight against the devil with the sign of the cross and blessed water. The last cure are the fires of purgatory by which a person will, once sufficiently cooked and cleansed and washed of every burden of uncleanness, definitely end up in the kingdom of heaven.

Servants of the Antichrist teach that the Pope is the head of the Church, that he is a mixture of man and God, that he has authority in heaven, on earth and in purgatory, that he is infallible, that truly all must submit to him if they want to be saved, and that he has to submit to nobody, even if he should pull countless nations into eternal ruin in chains with him.

In this sense, the Antichrist shamelessly and criminally pulls miserable people away from Christ, the only mediator and savior, from divine law, not only towards the wickedness of ordinary people, but also towards certain places, costumes, clothing, hoods, anointments and magically sanctified water and salts, as well as other inane and truly dead elements of the world which are no better than Egyptian and pagan deities, and which lead to their ruin and the contempt of Christ.

## **II Thessalonians 2:3-13**

Before the final judgment, there will be a defection (i.e., people will go from Christ to the Antichrist) and the man of sin and son of ruin will be revealed (the Antichrist) who is the enemy, and who will rise against all that which is called God or holy (i.e., he will dare to proclaim rules against the revealed Word and the commandments of the almighty God regarding the Eucharist and countless other things). He will sit in the temple of God, pretending to be God, (i.e., willingly destroying one thing in faith, and setting up something else, he will blindly use his charters to bind or release consciousness, constantly shouting: “The Church of Christ is built on me, and whatever I bind or release according to my judgment, that is bound or unbound in heaven. Listen to me rather than the beloved son of the living God.”). But people need to remember that Jesus warned about this while he was still in the flesh, and now they know what keeps him from showing up in his own time. Truly, the mystery of iniquity is already at work, only there is someone now who will keep him until he is removed. Then the Lawless One will be revealed (the Antichrist). The Lord Jesus will execute him with the breath of his mouth, (i.e., through his word, as Luther says) and destroy him through his coming (i.e., there will be remnants of Christian persecution until the last day), him who through the work of Satan comes with all power, false signs and miracles and with all unrighteous deception (i.e., through different apparent miracles and Satan’s tricks with which the papacy is filled) of those who are in ruin (that is the refuge of the papists) because they did not accept the love of truth so that they may be saved (in the same way today, countless papists and dissenters hold contempt for truth, or they persecute it with relentless wantonness). That is why God sends them illusions of efficacy so that they will believe lies (i.e., that they start praising the order, discipline, rituals and the pagan brightness of the Antichrist and, in that way, join the Antichrist) and all who did not believe the truth (the clear word of God), but opted for unrighteousness (i.e., godless anti-Christianity) are condemned. Others, however, should always thank God because he has, through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit and faith in truth, called them to salvation.

## **Daniel 11:36-39**

The king will do whatever he wants, lifting and raising himself above all Gods (i.e., the Antichrist loves to be above all political leaders who Scripture calls gods), he will speak blasphemy against the God of gods (i.e., he will dare to twist the word and faith of the almighty God with his rules) and he will succeed, until the wrath is full – for what is determined, that will be fulfilled (just as the papacy has, for a

long time, succeeded in undertaking atrocities in the areas of faith and politics to the point where the pope has brought his kingdom to a peak of absolute godlessness). He will not care about the gods of his fathers (just like the pope does not teach that salvation is only possible through Christ, like the fathers, but through countless other saviors and other mediations) nor the love of women (understandably, women who are godly and are fit by God for marriage), rather they will give themselves to fornication and they will pollute themselves with sodomic passions. Not for any other god, he will raise himself above everyone. Instead of them, he will honor the god of fortresses (i.e., great temples that look like fortresses and protected buildings, which actually means Maoz). He will honor the god which his fathers did not know with gold and silver, precious jewels and other precious things (i.e., in the past, the first bishops of Rome did not think that faith was to be found in rocks and fortresses that need to be worshiped, but the pope put his faith in them, decorating God with gold, silver, precious jewels, beads and other expensive things, as seen by experience). He will attack the city fortresses with the help of a foreign god (i.e., he will enlarge his worship with pagan idol worship and rituals). He will heap honor on those who acknowledge him, and he will give them authority over people and land as a reward (i.e., the Antichrist will exalt his spiritual followers) and he will pile on them honor, titles and authority.

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